DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 349 215 SO 022 343

AUTHOR Ohrn, Deborah Gore, Ed.
TITLE Visiting the Amana Colonies.
INSTITUTION Iowa State Historical Society, Iowa City.
REPORT NO ISSN-0278-0208
PUB DATE Apr 92
NOTE 33p.; For related issues, see ED 339 631, ED 328 475, ED 319 641, ED 314 356, and ED 314 306.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Instructional Materials (For Learner) (051)
JOURNAL CIT Goldfinch: Iowa History for Young People; v13 n4 Apr 1992

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Citizenship Education; *Cultural Education; Elementary Education; *Ethnic Groups; Learning Activities; *Local History; *Social Studies; *State History
IDENTIFIERS *Amana Colonies

ABSTRACT

This issue of "The Goldfinch: Iowa History for Young People" focuses upon the Amana Colonies, which were home to many German immigrants in the 19th century, and which retain much of their ethnic heritage today. The articles and activities included in this issue are "Amana Today"; "No Black Buggies in Amana"; "Visiting Tante Marie and Onkel Gottfried"; "School Days"; "Where in Middle Amana is Wild Rosie?"; "Old Amana Architecture"; "Elsie's New Dress"; "Games and Rhymes"; "Oma's Attic"; "Eyeball Benders"; and "Watch Out! You Could End Up Like..." (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

The Goldfinch

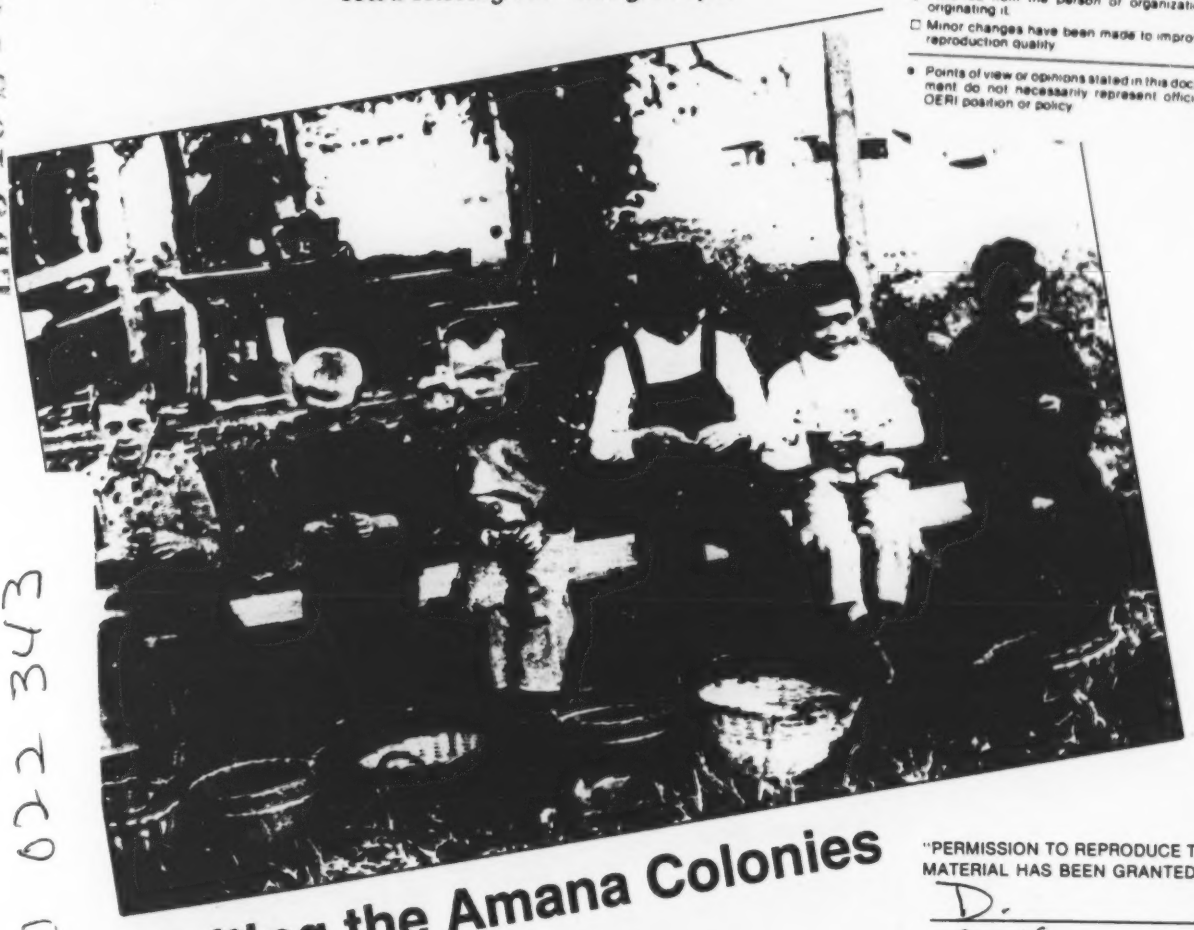
Iowa History for Young People

April 1992

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- ☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED349215
SO 022 343

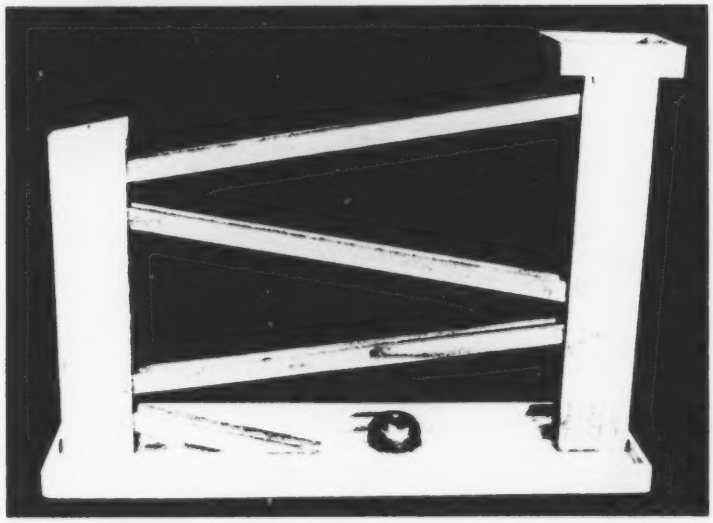


Visiting the Amana Colonies

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
D. GORE
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

History Mystery



Steven Ohrn

Most German children growing up in the Amana (a-MAN-a) Colonies wanted one of these. Its name in English means "marble highway." These *Klickerbahns* *(CLICK-ah-bons) were special presents at Christmas or birthdays. Made by hand, *Klickerbahns* were often two-feet high and one- and one-half feet wide. To play, you'd drop marbles in the top and watch them slide back and forth until they dinged the bell at the bottom. Depending upon their rate of speed, the marbles fell into holes worth different points. The player with the most points won. *Klickerbahns* are still made and sold in the Amana Colonies today. To find out more about games and life in the Amanas, read this issue of *The Goldfinch*.

*German words like *Klickerbahn* are in *italics* throughout this issue.

The **Goldfinch**

Volume 13, Number 4
April 1992

EDPRESS
1990 GOLDEN LAMP AWARD

Winner 1990 Golden Lamp Award for Excellence in Educational Journalism

Editor: Deborah Gore Ohrn. **Publisher:** Christie Dailey. **Consulting Editors:** Jonathan Andelson, professor of anthropology, Grinnell College; Lanny Haldy, executive director, Museum of Amana History; Gordon Kellenberger, president, Amana Arts Guild; Steven Ohrn, folklorist; Elizabeth Schoenfelder, Amana resident. **Editorial assistance:** Susanna Ashton and Jen Guttenfelder. **Children's Advisory Board:** Jessica Bergman, Prairie Home School, Iowa City; Amber Massa, Roosevelt Elementary School, Iowa City.

Special thanks to: Barbara Hoehnle, librarian, and Catherine Oehl, curator, Museum of Amana History, and Joan Liffring-Zug for their assistance with research and photographs. Thanks to Gordon Kellenberger and Shannon Albert of the Amana/Clear Creek Middle School, Middle Amana, for their help with this issue. The article on page 8 was adapted from an unpublished manuscript, "Through The Eyes of a Child—A Portrait on a Visit to 'Tante Lizzie and Onkel Gottfried' of the Amana Colonies," by Henrietta Laubly, 1972. The characters of Wild Rosie and Goldie by Jerry Brown.

ON THE COVER: Amana boys knit after school in the early 20th century. Both boys and girls as young as four or five learned how to knit useful items such as socks and mittens. **BACK COVER:** Girls line up. Photographs by Bertha Shambaugh, courtesy of the Museum of Amana History.

IN THIS ISSUE

Features

4
Amana Today
A trip to the Amana Colonies today—can you find the old Amanas?

7
No Black Buggies in Amana!
Learn the difference between Amana and the Amish.

8
Visiting *Tante* Marie and *Onkel* Gottfried
The story of how the Amana people left Germany and came to Iowa.

13
School Days
How Amana kids learned before 1932

16
Where in Middle Amana is Wild Rosie?
Figure out the geography clues to find Wild Rosie

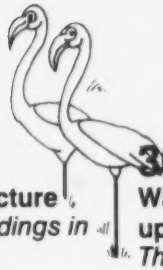
18
Old Amana Architecture
What makes the buildings in Amana so unique?

20
Elsie's New Dress
A play about life in Old Amana

24
Games and Rhymes
Remembered Amana games and rhymes

26
***Oma's* Attic**
Can you find the hidden treasures?

27
Eyeball Benders
Zoom-in photos of Amana folk art



30
Watch Out! You could end up like . . .
The story of a popular German tale

Departments

2
History Mystery

28
Disk Detective

29
History Makers

30
Answers

31
The Roost

printed with soy-based ink on recycled paper

The Goldfinch (ISSN 0278-0208) is published in September, November, February, and April by the State Historical Society of Iowa, 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa 52240 (319/335-3916). Second-class postage paid at Iowa City, Iowa. Subscriptions are $10 for four issues.

Postmaster: Send address changes to: *The Goldfinch*, State Historical Society of Iowa, 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

State Historical Society of Iowa © 1992.

No portion of *The Goldfinch* may be reproduced without prior permission.

The Goldfinch is named after the Iowa state bird. The wild rose is Iowa's state flower.

Amana Today

More than one million people visit the Amana Colonies each year to eat and to shop. But the seven villages of Amana are much more than a tourist attraction!

by Millie K. Frese

IN THE LATE 1800s they came on horseback or by train. Soon automobiles carried sightseers along dusty roads between the seven Amana villages: South, West, High, Middle, Amana, East, and Homestead. They came to investigate the home of a religious German group called the Community of True Inspiration. Early tourists purchased handcrafts and homegrown vegetables from local women, or woolen goods from Amana mills. Reporters, scholars, and photographers tried to learn about these people and their **communal** (shared) way of life.

Like many other religious groups who came to the United States in the 19th century, the Inspirationists' wanted to live and worship by themselves.

But their dream failed. The communal way of life ended 60 years ago in 1932. Since then, the Amana Colonies has become Iowa's number one tourist destination. Up to one-and one-half million tourists flock to the villages to step back in time and see "the old way of life."

Germans in Iowa

Amana's founders brought part of the old world—their German homeland—with them. They spoke German in their homes, schools, and churches. German folktales and songs amused Amana children.

Many of these old world traditions thrive in today's Amana Colonies. German is still spoken in some of the church services, although English is now used in Amana schools and most homes. The Colonies are famous for the furniture, woolen goods, and woven rugs produced in Amana. Local artists share the pride in their heritage as they revive crafts such as tinsmithing, basketmaking, mitten knitting, carpet weaving, quilting, and blacksmithing.

In many ways, Amana's German heritage is exaggerated for today's tourists. Some workers in shops and restaurants wear costumes traditional to Germany but not worn by Inspirationists in early

Amana. The colonies also celebrate Oktoberfest, a harvest festival born in Germany but not observed in Amana villages under the old system.

Amana restaurants still serve many dishes that were commonly prepared in the old community kitchens. These include ham, hearth-baked bread, cottage cheese, and fried potatoes. However, public restaurants also serve traditional German fare (roasted pork chops and bratwurst) rarely found in early Amana kitchens.

Finding the real Amana

The simple world of the Inspirationists can still be found if you look past the new homes, shops, and other buildings added to the Amana landscape through the years. Church buildings reflect the Inspirationists' simplicity. Made of brick, stone, or wood, church architecture matches that of other Amana buildings. There are no steeples or stained glass windows to set churches apart.

The elders conduct services according to the same order of worship used for decades. No musical instruments accompany the hymns, and women still wear the traditional black shawls, aprons, and caps.

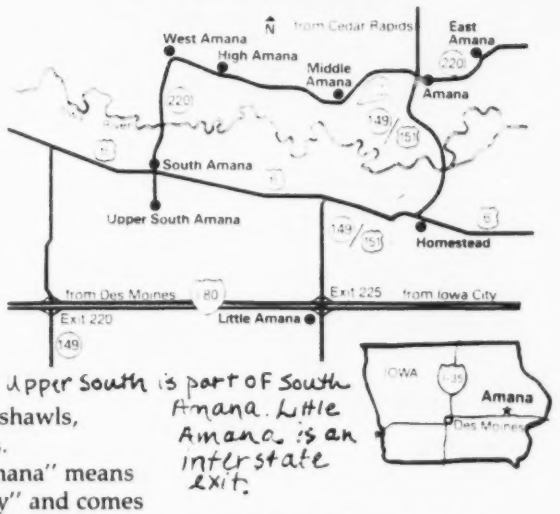
The name "Amana" means "believe faithfully" and comes from the *Bible*. Although the old way of communal life in Amana is gone forever, the command to "remain faithful" endures in the Amana name.

Joining the world

Amana residents could not help being influenced by the growing, everchanging nation around them. America introduced many things to Amana—cars, radios, electric lights, movies, dancing, make-up, new clothing, and hairstyles. And baseball. At first, Amana's religious leaders considered the game "worldly," a waste of time, and forbade it. But Amana's youth fell in love with the game. Bill Zuber grew up in Amana, learned to play baseball, then pitched for the New York Yankees. Today a restaurant in Homestead bears his name.

(*continued to page 6*)

The Amana Colonies



Upper South is part of South Amana. Little Amana is an interstate exit.

Joan Liffring Zug Collection, SHSI-Iowa City

(*continued from page 5*)

Another Amana example of the "American dream" is Amana Refrigeration, Inc. Its founder, George C. Foerstner, had an eighth-grade education and a good idea. After studying refrigeration technology in the early 1930s, he and a friend built a beverage cooler. The business expanded to include eight employees who built and sold large refrigeration units for community use. Now, the Middle Amana plant employs 2,500 people. Another factory built in Tennessee produces air conditioners, and other products all bearing the Amana name.

As in the old days, farming is still one of the Colonies' largest industries. Timber covers about half of the 26,000 acres of farmland. The other half produces corn, soybeans, sorghum, oats, and alfalfa, and supports hogs and beef cattle.

Gordon Kellenberger

Students learn about Amana architecture.

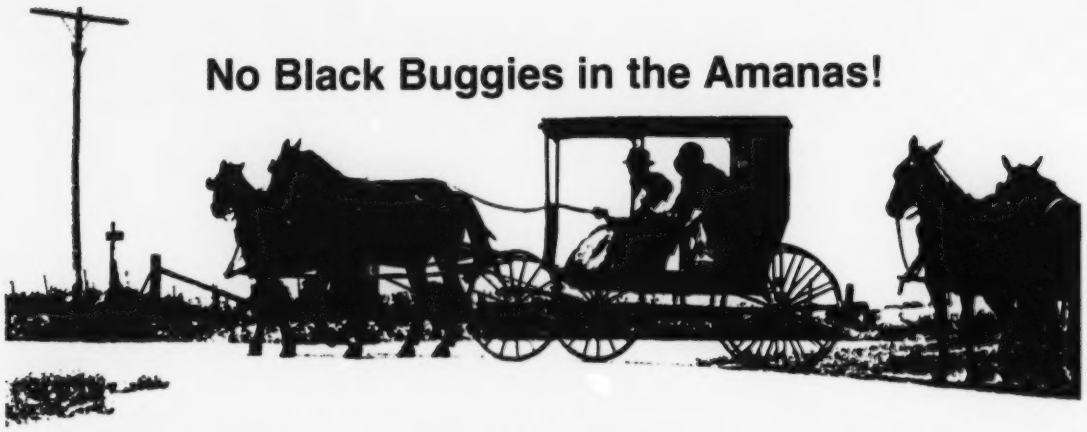
Caroline Trumpold assists home economic students with a quilt.

Gordon Kellenberger

Exploring the Amanas

In putting together this issue of *The Goldfinch*, we went to Amana homes, to the Museum of Amana History, and to the Amana/Clear Creek Middle School to find out more about the history of Amana. Read why the Inspirationists' dream where all share equally did not survive. Perform a play about communal life called the "Elsie's New Dress." Study old Amana architecture—no pink flamingos! Recite the rhymes that enchanted Amana kids years ago. This issue of *The Goldfinch* will help you look beyond the flashy billboards and tourist shops to see the real Amana.

No Black Buggies in the Amanas!



State Historical Society of Iowa

Have you ever looked for the Amish in the Amana Colonies? If you have, you probably didn't see much. There are no Amish people in the Amana Colonies. There are some similarities between the two groups. These similarities sometimes cause people to confuse them. Both migrated from Germany because of religious disputes. And both believed in daily worship of God and a simple way of life. The biggest similarity is that both groups believed in working hard, helping each other, and living without luxury. Many people confuse the Amish with the Amanas because their names sound similar, but the two communities are very different.

The Amanas

The Amanas were founded in 1855 by a group of religious people called the Community of True Inspiration led by Christian Metz. These Inspirationists rebelled against the Lutheran church in Germany. They believed a simpler religion was better.

People in the Amanas lived communally—they shared many things. Their homes were provided by the church and did not have kitchens. Instead, there were a few large kitchens that served everyone! The church also provided jobs for everyone that helped out the community. Each job was just as important as another job in the village.

In 1932, the Great Change took place. After that, people in Amana no longer lived a communal life but began living like most other Iowans.

The Amish

The Amish came to Iowa in the late 1840s and first settled in Johnson and Washington counties. The Amish worshipped in their homes. Unlike people in the Amana Colonies, the Amish believed that they should live on farms, not in cities or towns.

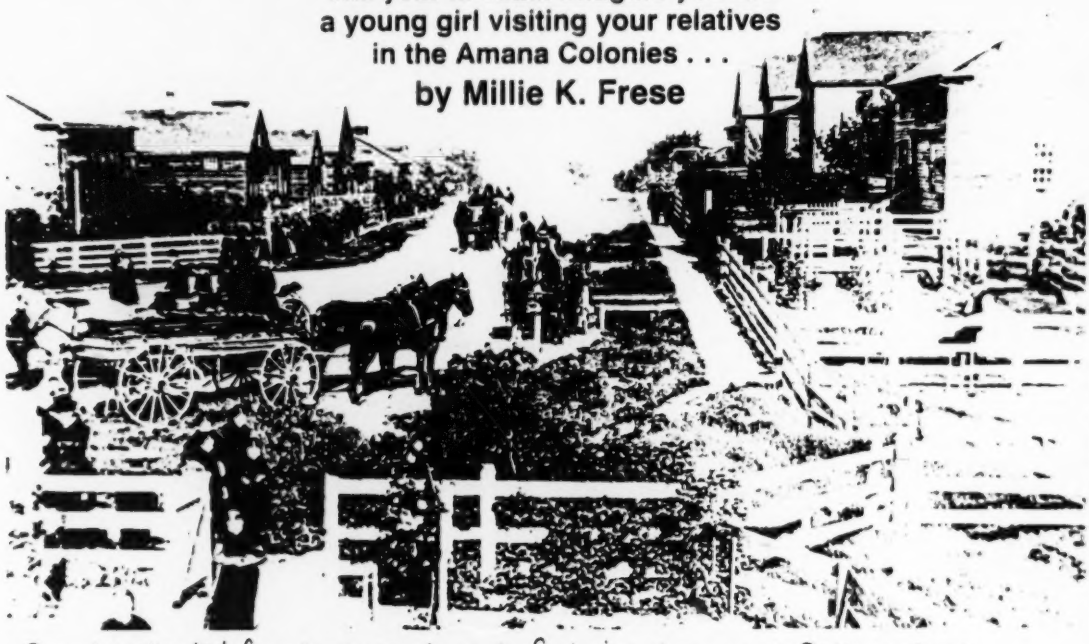
Today, there are two different types of Amish communities. These are called the Old Order Amish and the Beachy Amish. They share the same religious beliefs, but most of the Old Order Amish live on farms and do not drive automobiles or have telephones or electricity. They farm with horses and don't use artificial chemicals. The Beachy Amish, who live in Iowa near Kalona and Leon, have adopted some modern ways. They can have telephones, electricity, and black automobiles.

—Jen Guttenfelder

Visiting *Tante* Marie and *Onkel* Gottfried

The year is 1920. Imagine you are a young girl visiting your relatives in the Amana Colonies . . .

by Millie K. Frese



Ivan Liffring-Zug Collection, SHSI-Iowa City

Boardwalks led from homes to shops to factories in the early 20th century.

GLOSSARY

These are a few of the German words you'll be reading in this story:

Guten Tag = (GOO-ten TAWG) Good day

Kind, Kinder = (KIHND, KIHN-der) child, children

Lebkucken = (layb-KOOK-en) honey cookies

Onkel = (OHN-kel) uncle

Tante = (TAHN-te) aunt

Werkzeug = (verk-ZOYG) instrument, or prophet

Puffs of steam rise to meet the December sky as the Milwaukee train rumbles closer. I hear its chugging engine and shrieking whistle. The ground shakes beneath my feet as the giant engine finally screeches to a halt at the Cedar Rapids depot, hissing as it blows off excess steam.

"This train is going to Fairfax, Walford, South Amana, Ottumwa, and all points south," the conductor announces, "All aboard!"

I have my ticket, my suitcase, and the gifts Mother chose for *Tante* Marie and *Onkel* Gottfried.

"And where are you going, young lady?" the conductor asks as he stoops to punch my ticket.

"To visit my aunt and uncle in Amana," I say, standing a little straighter in the crisp air. A warm coat covers my new dress. My new high top boots

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

made of red leather with black-patent trim and red-silk tassels at the top leave sharp prints in the fresh dusting of snow.

I find my seat next to a window on the side facing the depot. Mother and Father wave, their breath lingering in the winter air. I wave back, my hands still snug inside the mittens my mother knit when she was a little girl living in Amana. I study the detailed snowflake pattern knit into the back of each mitten, forgetting for the moment that I'm a little scared to be on the train by myself for the first time.

"Watch for the South Amana sign and don't forget to get off there." I remember my mother's warning earlier this morning as she braided my hair in two rows tied with wide hair ribbons in preparation for today's venture. "Remember not to open the train window—you'll get a shower of black soot in your face."

"Yes, Mother. I'll remember." I tried not to talk too much because the braids are so tight. *Tante* Marie doesn't like to see a girl's hair out of place.

I watch telephone poles and farm houses whiz by as the train roars through the countryside. The hour it takes to ride from Cedar Rapids to South Amana seems to fly by just as fast. Soon I see *Tante* Marie among the villagers gathered to meet the train. She wears her silvery hair in braids that coil around her head. A heavy shawl wraps her shoulders.

"So good to see you, *Kind*!" Aunt Marie calls out. It takes my ears a moment to get reacquainted with the German accent clinging to her words. "Come, we're preparing black walnut cookies for the Christmas holiday."

The warm, sweet smell of baking cookies teases us toward the kitchen.

I cringe as the unpleasant taste of walnuts crosses my memory. *Tante* Marie sees the brief twisted expression on my face and laughs a very proper laugh.

"Fear not—there will also be *Lebkuchen*!"

She remembers that honey cookies are my favorite. I remember how much fun it is to help make cookies in the community kitchen.

I almost run to keep up with her quick steps. She doesn't like to surrender a single moment to idleness.

We drop off my bag at *Tante* Marie and *Onkel* Gottfried's house on our way to the kitchen. It's quiet inside, everything in its place. Uncle won't be home from the cabinet shop until suppertime. My cousins, Henry and Emma, are still in school.

The warm, sweet smell of baking cookies teases us toward the kitchen. Women are bent over long tables. Thud! Schwikk! go the rolling pins with each stroke. It's as if these women, looking alike in their dark calico dresses and full-length aprons, have their motions planned to be in unison.

Aunt Marie hands me an apron and we take our places near a mound of dough at the end of the table. The others smile and say, "*Guten Tag*." A few speak the phrase in English: "Good Day." Then it is quiet except for the noise of the rolling pins. I fear they are quiet because of me—afraid they might embarrass me since I understand so little German. Or maybe they're just quiet because I'm an outsider. Maybe it's just because there's so much to do.

I'm not used to so much

(continued to page 10)

(*continued from page 9*)

quiet, so I try to think of something to say as I fumble with the rolling pin *Tante* Marie gave me. "*Tante* Marie, please tell me about when Great-grandmother and her family left Germany to come to America," I say, my cheeks turning red as I hear my voice squeak above the sound of the rolling pins.

"But you know that story as well as I do!" *Tante* Marie replies.

It takes little coaxing for her to begin. . . .

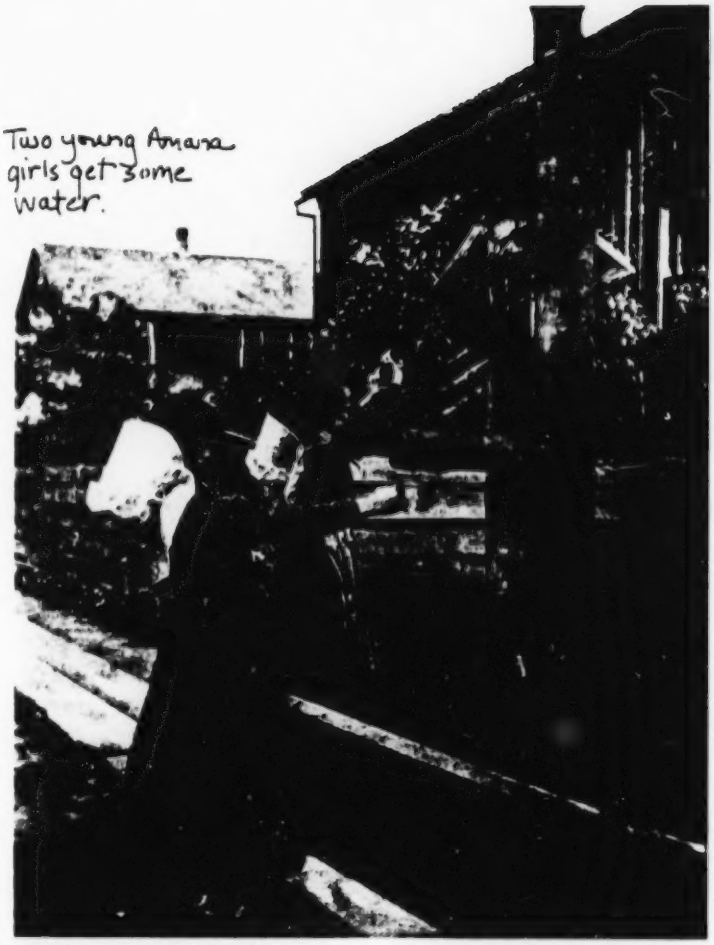
"While living in Germany, your great-grandmother's father heard of the Community of True Inspiration, but he wasn't convinced that God still chose and spoke to prophets like in the biblical days."

"What is the German word for the prophets, *Tante* Marie?"

"'*Werkzeuge*.' In English it means 'instrument.' They were very religious people. The Lord chose them as his voice to the people."

By now all the women are listening as the cookies pile up in bushel baskets.

"Your great-grandfather had his doubts at first, but still he moved his family to Ronneburg, the castle where the Inspirationists lived. The Inspirationists didn't agree



Joan Liffring-Zug Collection, SHSI-Iowa City

with the way the church was being run and wanted to serve God apart from the corruption in the world. The message of the *Werkzeug* Christian Metz spoke to your great-grandfather's soul."

"How did Christian Metz know he was a *Werkzeug*?" I ask.

"We cannot know how he knew. God gave him a sign only he understood. But we can tell by his testimonies Christian Metz indeed spoke for the Lord."

"Why did they come to Amana?"

"*Kind*, it was many years before the Inspirationists were

led to this beautiful land. They lived in Germany until the landlords overcharged their rents and taxes. It was persecution! A bad drought finally forced Christian Metz to look for another home. You see, the government and the church were very angry with the Inspirationists because our people wouldn't serve in the military or send our children to the public schools."

"Where did they go?" I ask.

"Christian Metz and three followers came to America to buy land."

"Amana?"

"No, not Amana. The men purchased 5,000 acres of land from the Seneca Indians near Buffalo, New York. Your great-grandfather was afraid to take his wife and their young daughter—your grandmother—on a ship for so many weeks. But he could not bear to stay behind. Eight hundred people sailed across the ocean to America."

"Did they like it in New York?"

"Oh yes! They called their new home 'Ebenezer.' It means 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

"If they liked Ebenezer so much, why did they leave?" I asked.

"You ask so many questions! Enough talk for now. It is time to serve the meal."

With that *Tante* Marie ends her story. And I realize how hungry I am. I look forward to supper in Amana because they serve such delicious soup. Tonight we'll eat boiled beef, barley soup, spinach, crusty bread, and fresh butter.

"*Tante* Marie, please tell me about when Great-grandmother and her family left Germany to come to America. . . ."

I sit beside cousin Emma at the table. It used to be that everyone ate at the community kitchen, men and boys on one side of the dining room, women and girls on the other. Now, some people carry the food they need in baskets to their own homes to eat.

When the table is cleared and the dishes washed, the day's work is finished. *Tante* Marie is quilting a berry-colored plain cloth quilt—it's one single piece of fabric rather than pieced scraps. Sometimes the women get together in the evening to work on each other's quilts, but *Tante* Marie prefers to stitch hers alone. Cousin Henry plays with the marble game *Onkel* Gottfried made for him last Christmas. The marbles roll down wooden troughs that zigzag from the top to the base.

"*Tante* Marie, please finish telling about the Inspirationists coming to Amana." My hands are idle for I've never mastered the fancy work like my relatives in Amana.

"No, no. *Onkel* must finish the story for you. I've told enough of it!" Her fingers fly over the quilt, stitching along chalk lines I can hardly see.

"Tell me, where did your *Tante* leave off?"

"She told me of the voyage to America," I begin. "But *Onkel*, why did the Inspirationists leave Ebenezer?"

"The outside world began crowding in around the believers in Ebenezer after a few years," *Onkel* Gottfried begins.

"By then the people had adopted the communal system. Not every family had been able to earn enough money in Ebenezer to buy their own land or support themselves, so the people agreed—and made it

(continued to page 12)

(*continued from page 11*)

our law—to share all the wealth, work, and rewards equally. The community prospered and soon outgrew the settlement.

"A few men traveled west, searching for frontier farmland in Kansas and Iowa. The trips were difficult journeys, but these men were faithful and believed God would lead them to the right place. They were tired and homesick for their people when they arrived in central Iowa. The wide green valley with its high bluffs and flat bottom lands reminded the people of their German homeland. The forests would provide all the lumber they needed for buildings and furniture. There was a river to power the woolen mill, fertile land for crops.

"It took ten years to finish moving the community from Ebenezer to what we now know as Amana. The people worked hard to clear forests, make bricks, and build new homes. In each of the seven villages, the church was one of the first buildings put up."

"*Onkel* Gottfried, where are the *Werkzeuge* today?"

"There are no more," he sighs. "The last, Barbara Landmann, died 25 years ago. Since then, the Lord has found no one worthy."

We eat sliced apples before climbing into our beds. Heated flatirons wrapped in flannel and placed at the foot of each bed take the chill out of the bedding. Crisp white linens smell of soap and sunshine, even in December. I pull a blue, quilted comforter up to my nose, sink into the center of the twin mattress, and fall asleep.

I'm awakened by the loud ringing of the bakery wagon bell. The delivery man makes the rounds to all the community kitchens, leaving bread in huge hand-woven baskets. It's a day much like the ones before, and like those to follow. There is something peaceful and familiar in knowing that. Safe, like Mother's handknit mittens.

Men leave the men's entrance/exit at the church in Amana. Men and women entered and left church separately.

Museum of Amana History

School Days

Yes, boys knitted in Old Amana. They even went to knitting school. Read more about going to school in the Amanas.

Museum of Amana History

by Millie K. Frese

AMANA CHILDREN gathered outside the village schoolhouses. Boys wore sturdy overalls and straw hats and girls wore long dresses and bonnets. They played games, chanted rhymes, and sang old German folk songs before filing inside.

Amana schools were much like other rural, one-room schools in Iowa 100 years ago. Children studied reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, geography, and history. Classes recited their lessons in unison for the teacher to hear. They took seventh- and eighth-grade county examinations like all other students in Iowa at the time.

Six days a week

But this is where the similarities end. Amana children attended school six days a week with no summer vacation. Amana school days

(*continued to page 14*)

(*continued from page 13*)

started early in the morning and ended late in the day. Long school days provided necessary care and supervision for children whose parents, grandparents, and grown brothers and sisters were busy at their jobs.

Children entered Amana schools at age five, speaking only German. Students learned English as a second language and used English textbooks for many courses. Use of English in daily conversation was discouraged—it was considered "worldly." The religious faith and practice of the Inspirationists required Amana villages to remain separated, sheltering the people from outside temptations. The rest of the world had little influence on early Amana since the German-speaking people couldn't talk freely with English-speaking "outsiders."

Three-part days

School days were broken into three parts: academic and religious instruction, playtime, and manual skill training. Even the youngest children learned skills they could use for the benefit of the community.

In the winter, boys and girls learned to knit. Young children knit stockings and mittens for themselves and their families, while other boys trained in shops and factories to learn a trade. In the summer, children tended gardens and grape arbors in the school yards, taking turns planting, hoeing, watering, and cutting. As in much of rural Iowa, regular lessons were often set aside during harvest time so children could help with the extra work.

They were also supposed to eat without complaining—and not throw food or bones under the table.

Religious training in Amana schools included lessons from the Bible, a study of the history, traditions, beliefs, and leaders of the Community of True Inspiration. They also studied the "66 rules of daily living" for children. These rules, for example, reminded children to get up as soon as they awakened (no snooze button!) and turn their thoughts immediately toward God. Manners were also emphasized. Children were not to be greedy over food. They were to cut their food into small pieces, hold silverware daintily, and not spill on the tablecloth. They were instructed to chew quietly and not slurp their soup. They were also supposed to eat without complaining—and not throw food or bones under the table.

Eighth grade only

Few students attended school past the eighth grade. At age 14, children took their places as working members of the community. They were considered adults and expected to work in the communal way, with no one being paid for his or her labor. In exchange for a full day's work in an assigned job, the society met all daily needs—meals, housing, medical and dental care, and credit towards other necessities purchased in Amana shops.

Occasionally a young man was selected from the graduating class to attend high school outside Amana. He would then go on to college to become a doctor, dentist, pharmacist, or teacher. The community paid his tuition and expenses with the understanding that he would return and serve in his village without pay, just like all other members of the society.

Changes in school

Amana schools experienced many changes when the United States entered World War I in 1917. Hostility toward German people and businesses in Iowa often focused on the Amana villages. State investigators monitored Amana schools and curriculum throughout the war to make sure Amana was not on Germany's side. In 1918, Iowa's governor, William L. Harding, declared English the official language of the state. This law, known as the Language Proclamation, banned the use of any language other than English in public places such as schools or churches and even—on the telephone! Other languages could be spoken only in the privacy of one's home.

The Language Proclamation was overturned at the end of World War I. A more widespread use of English had been forced on the Amanas, and that could not be reversed. German was still, however, the language for religious instruction.

Changes in the Amana communities which led to reorganization in 1932 also led to major changes in the Amana school system. Saturday school and the extensive religious instruction were stopped. Although kids still received instruction in German and religion in Sunday school, English continued to be taught in the schools. All Amana teenagers were given the option of attending high school in one of the neighboring towns. Through the new Amana high school's activities, students and their families joined the world around them.

At the turn of the century, Amana children went to school 5½ days a week.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Where in Middle Amana is Wild Rosie?

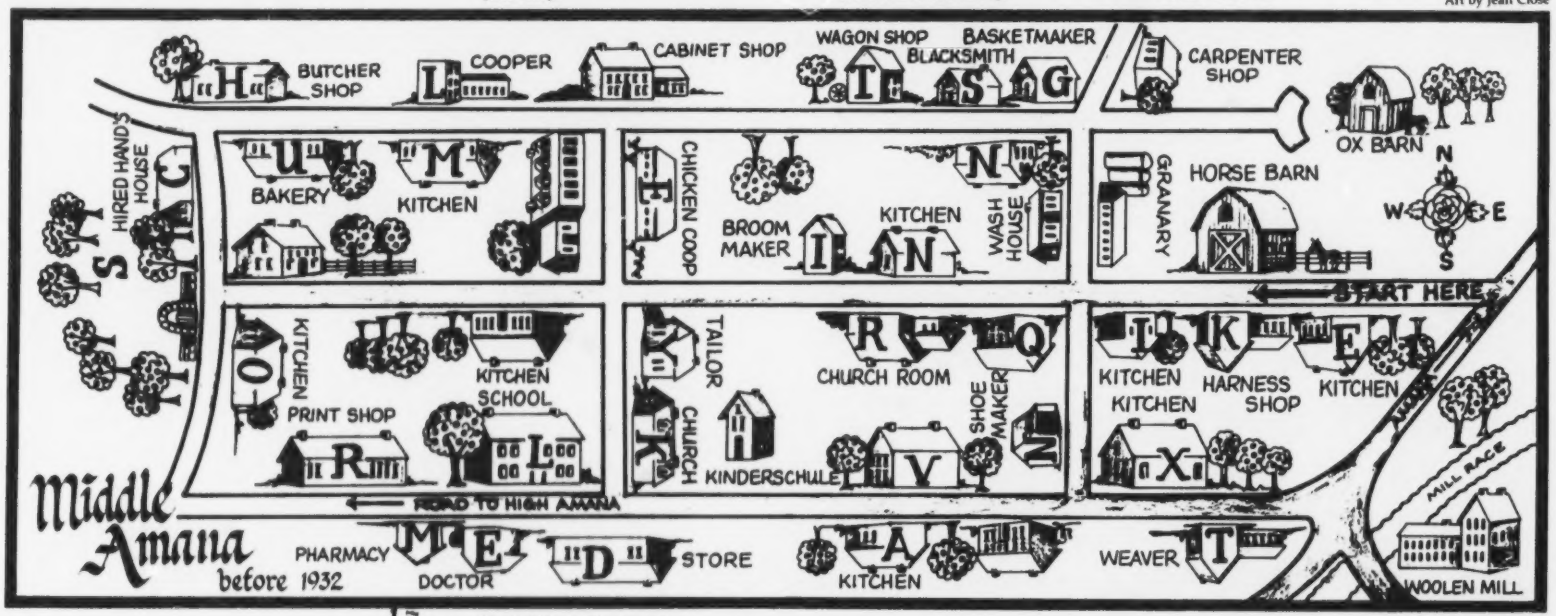
Follow the directions and pick a letter at the different places in Middle Amana. Put the letters in the blank spaces below the map. When you finish, you'll find out where Wild Rosie is hiding.

1. Start at the harness shop (letter "K") and go west.
2. Stop at the kitchen for a sandwich.
3. Head south and get your shoe fixed at the shoemaker's.
4. Turn west on the road to High Amana.
5. Go west one block and buy some cloth at the store.
6. Visit the doctor.
7. Continue west and visit the print shop.
8. Head west and then north—rest at the cemetery.
9. Deliver the sandwich to the hired hands' house.
10. Go north to the butchershop.
11. Cross the street and smell the bread at the bakery.
12. Continue east and visit the cooper (barrelmaker).
13. Go east and then turn south—stop at the chicken coop.

Answer: _____

HINT: The compass shows directions!

Art by Jean Close



Answer on page 30.

*The buildings without names are homes.

Old Amana Architecture

By Susanna Ashton

In Old Amana, people wanted their buildings to reflect their lifestyles and values. Simplicity and usefulness were the most important concerns. Everything had to be useful. Decorations such as fancy carvings and window shutters were discouraged. Although every building was different, before the Great Change most Amana structures looked a lot alike. After the Great Change, many families added bathrooms, porches, and even colorfully painted their houses. Most old Amana buildings, though, have kept their simple and basic look. They are usually made of wood, brick, or stone and are one, one-and-a-half, or two stories high.

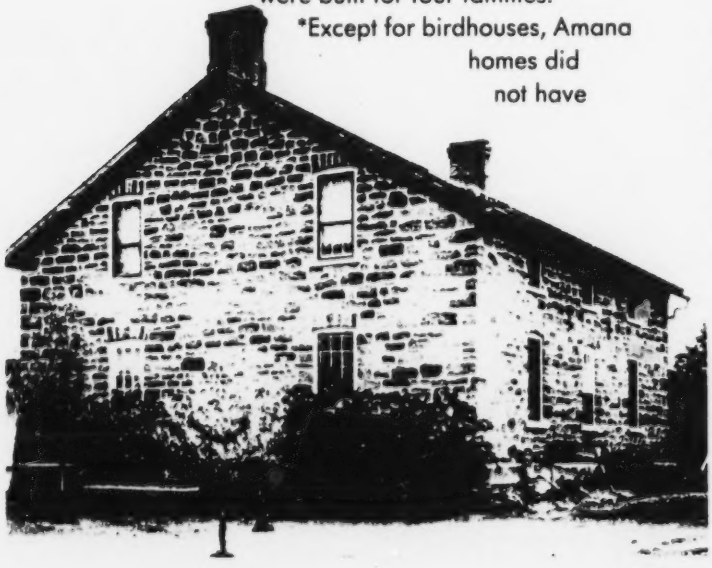
If you visit the Amanas today you will see many changes, but you can still see the plain Amana-style buildings underneath.

Amana Homes: Did You Know?

*By not painting their homes, Amana people saved money. Paint wasn't cheap!

*Most traditional Amana homes were built for four families.

*Except for birdhouses, Amana homes did not have statutes or decorations around their houses. (for example, NO PLASTIC FLAMINGOS)



SHSI

*Almost all land was used for something. Most families had vegetable or flower gardens instead of lawns.

*Doorways often had only small roofs or "hoods"—no fancy porches.

*Instead of having their own rooms, Amana kids shared. Usually there would a girls' room and a boys' room.

*House pets were discouraged, but some cats and dogs could be found in the Amana villages. Cats caught mice and dogs guarded livestock.

*Wooden trellises were often built on or next to houses to grow grapes. The leaves shaded and cooled the houses in the summer.

*Only fruit trees were allowed! Other trees were considered unnecessary.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Directions:
You and your family have just moved to the Amanas. You want your new house to look like an old (pre-1932) Amana house. What changes would you make? Circle the things you would change.

Art by Mary Moye-Rowley

(Answer on page 30.)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ACT ONE

Scene One

Narrator A: Among the rolling hills and timber in a brick house in Middle Amana, Iowa, lives 14-year-old Elsie Weber. The Weber house is plain and simple. It looks like the other houses in the seven villages of Amana in 1914. Sprinkled around the houses, beautiful lady slippers, candy tuft, zinnias, marigolds, and other flowers burst through the rich soil. Elsie walks back to another shift at her dreary job in the community kitchen. She opens the kitchen door . . .

Mrs. Miller: You're late again, We have to prepare the lunch for 40 people.

Elsie (*under her breath*): I'm sorry I'm late, Mrs. Miller!

Mrs. Miller: Bring in the coal and corn cobs to add to the fire in the dining room. Let's get to work—we're fixing pork sausage and potato soup.

Elsie (*to Louise*): I hate this job. We always do the same chores. One week we cook, the next week we have off, then we help clean dishes.

Louise (*whispering as she chops onions*): I don't mind working here. It's fun when we sing. But I am soooo . . . tired of eating the same food! Mondays are pork roast and boiled potatoes.

Elsie: Our favorite?

Louise: Saturday's special tomato soup and liver dumplings!

Narrator A: After the noon meal, all of the kitchen girls have gone home except for Elsie and Louise.

Louise: I'm so tired! I hate getting up at 4:30 to be here by five in the morning.

Elsie (*tosses a cold potato at her*): This will wake you up!

Louise (*giggling, tosses one back*): Here, take this!

Elsie (*throws a handful of potatoes*): Aaaa!

Narrator A: As the potatoes fly back and forth, the kitchen looks like mashed potatoes.

Narrator A: Elsie and Louise burst into laughter as they reach for mops.

Scene Two

Narrator A: Elsie and Louise walk home.

Elsie: My cousin Renata comes from Cedar Rapids by train tomorrow! She's bringing my secret package!

Louise: Oh, Elsie! Did you order that new dress from the Sears Catalog!

Elsie (*claps her hands and jumps*): Ya! It's beautiful.

Louise: You can't wear that!

Elsie: Just watch. I'm sick of these frumpy black dresses. Renata gets to wear such beautiful store-bought clothes. She can make up her own mind about her life!

Louise: So you think this dress is going to make a difference? What will your mama and papa say?

Elsie: Tsk, tsk. Don't tell anyone. I'm going to wear it to the kittenball* game.

Louise (*shrieking*): WHAT? First of all, kittenball is banned. If we get caught for going, we're in deep trouble, and on top of that you're going to wear a store-bought dress!

Elsie: Ya! *Auf Wiedersehen!* 'Til tomorrow!

ACT TWO

Scene One

Narrator B: The next day

(*continued to page 22*)

GLOSSARY

These are a few of the German words you'll be reading in this play:

Auf wiedersehen = (AWF Vee-der-say-en) goodbye
danke = (dan-KE) thank you
Die kleine = (DEE KLINE-ah) the little
ist = (IST) is
hier = (HERE) here
gute = (GOOT-ah) good
komm = (COMB) come
Wie geht's = (VEE GAYTS) How are you?
Oma = (OH-ma) grandmother
Opa = (OH-pa) grandfather

*A kittenball is a large softball.

(*continued from page 21*)
Renata arrives in the Amanas by train. After her kitchen work, Elsie meets Renata at home. Elsie changes from her work clothes into a simple, black frock. They head out the door.
Elsie: *Oma*, we're going for a walk in the timber!
Oma: *Gute Kinder!*
Renata: You're terrible Elsie!
Elsie: Well, we are walking through the woods to get to the kittenball game!
Renata: I'm so happy to be here. I love coming to the Amanas—it's so much fun to play with you! Here's your package, Elsie. I can't believe it took you almost two years to save up enough money selling eggs to buy it!
Elsie: *Danke*, Renata!
Narrator B: Elsie slips behind a bush and puts on a crisp, flowered pastel dress.
Renata: You look beautiful!
Narrator B: They hold hands and skip to the meadow.

Scene Two
Narrator B: The kittenball game is in the fifth inning. A group of girls from Middle and High Amana cheer on the players.
Rudy: You look like trouble today!
Elsie (*twirls again*): We were delayed by my kitchen work.
Rudy: I hope one of the elders didn't see you sneak off!
Renata: Why?
Rudy: The elders say that we aren't supposed to play baseball because it's too worldly and you girls aren't supposed to encourage us boys by watching.
Elsie: So, we broke the rules! Brother Schmidt will come talk to our fathers and we'll be asked not to come to church for a week.

"You don't understand. Baseball is forbidden!"

Rudy: My father doesn't agree with the elders about baseball being bad. But I don't think he believes playing ball is sinful.
Carl (*runs over with his mitt*): Wowsie, wow, Elsie! What a dress!
Rudy: Oh, my gosh. Here come the wood cutters! We're in trouble now! (*Everyone but Carl runs into the woods.*).

Scene Three
Narrator B: "No Neck," a hobo, saunters over to Carl.
No Neck: What's the deal here?
Carl: The woodcutters saw us!
No Neck: Why should they care?
Carl: You don't understand. Baseball is forbidden!
No Neck: You make a run for it—I'll put them off your scent!
Narrator B: Franz, a woodcutter, approaches.
Franz: Who were those kids who just ran off?
No Neck: Kids?
Franz: Yes, those kids you were talking to.
No Neck: Look here (*picking up mitt*).
Franz: A baseball mitt—that explains it. They were out here playing ball and you're trying to cover for them.
No Neck: Hey now! Don't you go making accusations you can't prove. That ain't no baseball mitt, well, that's my pillow!
Franz: Your pillow?
No Neck: Yes, sir. Leather's soft as butter and it's easy to carry. You know a traveling man like myself has got to travel light. Why this old mitt's been with me for years.

ACT THREE
Scene One
Narrator C: The next day, Elsie walks into the Weber parlor. Elsie's mother is working in the communal garden. Her father is at the woolen mill. *Opa* weaves rugs in the cellar, while *Oma* knits in the parlor.
Oma: *Wie geht's*, Elsie?
Elsie: I'm fine, Oma. How are you?
Oma (*yelling*): *Das kleine Kind ist hier, Opa!*
Narrator C: *Opa* enters the

parlor.
Opa: Sit child. Brother Schmidt will be here when your mama and papa return home from work. He has some words to share with us concerning your behavior.
Elsie (gulping): I can . . . I can . . . explain!
Oma: Silence, little one. I'm sure you have a *gute* reason for wearing a store-bought dress. It's hard to understand these things when you have a cousin from "the outside."
Frank (*enters the room*): I finished a mitten!
Oma: Komm here Frank, show your *Oma*.
Narrator C: Frank holds up a mitten.
Elsie: I don't know how you can stand the knitting school, Frank! I hated it. The needles always fell out of my hands.
Frank: You're a klutz.
Elsie: I'd rather read or go outside and . . .
Frank: Wear a new dress cheering for the kittenball players!
Oma* and *Opa: FRANK WEBER!!!

Scene Two
Narrator C: After dinner and early church services, Brother Schmidt visits the Webers. In the parlor, he meets with Elsie's parents and grandparents. Then, she is called in.
Brother Schmidt: How are you getting along in the community kitchen, Elsie?
Elsie: I like the other girls.
Brother Schmidt: But the work doesn't suit you?
Elsie: I won't complain, but it's not what I would have chosen for myself. It's not that the work is hard, it's just that it's always the same. I want to be a teacher.

"Each of us must give a little so that the community can thrive."

Brother Schmidt: We need you to work at the kitchen, Elsie, because it is necessary for the good of everyone. Do you understand?
Elsie: I'm trying to.
Brother Schmidt: The work you do is important. (*Pause*) We have a good home together. But each of us makes sacrifices, it is true. Each of us must give a little so that the community can thrive.
Narrator C: Elsie shrugs and stares at her feet.
Mama: Tell Brother Schmidt that you are sorry for your behavior yesterday!
Narrator C: Elsie says nothing.
Papa: Elsie!
Elsie: I'm not sorry, I'm not! I didn't play kittenball. I just watched! I just wanted SO BADLY a store-bought dress! My cousin Renata wears them all of the time.
Brother Schmidt: But my dear, your cousin's family left Amana to live in the world so that your uncle could find a high paying job. They live by different rules. Here in Amana, children must behave. I will have to banish you from church services for a week, young lady.
Elsie: I don't see why we have to wear black all of the time. God didn't put any black into rainbows!
Narrator C: All of the adults in the room shake their heads. Elsie sneaks a peak at her *Oma*, who suddenly smiles and—winks.

P.S.

Narrator D: In 1932, the Great Change took place in the Amana Colonies. The people voted to end the communal lifestyle. Many rules and restrictions were lifted. Young people openly rode in the new automobiles, listened to radios, and purchased store-bought clothing. Girls wore their hair in new stylish bobs and even rode bicycles on Sundays. Some Amana young people left the Amanas, but many stayed and remained faithful to the community they had grown up in.

Games and Rhymes

In a place where baseball was forbidden, playing games in communal Amana was a whole different ballgame.

Translated from German by Barbara Hoehnle

AMANA BOYS used to play a game called "Jail." They would hide from one another—like hide-and-seek. When found, they would have to go to jail. The jail just happened to be the "Geisterkeller" or "ghost cellar." It was actually a cave built into a hill that was the old brewery (where beer was made). The cave offered a place for scary stories.

We found out about the ghost cellar and other kids' games from four older Amana residents. Marie Geiger, Elise Berger, and Betty Wetjen grew up in communal Amana and told their stories in German for *Goldfinch* readers. We also spoke with Henry Schiff to get another point of view.

Amana girls in their bonnets and calico dresses play outside.

Joan Liffring-Zug Collection, SHSI-Iowa City

To each her own

Girls and boys were allowed to play together until the first grade. After first grade, they always played apart. The sidewalk was often the dividing point. "No girl wanted to be called a 'tomboy,'" according to one resident. Girls wore aprons, shawls, and caps or sunbonnets when playing. Boys wore caps and homemade pants and shirts.

Boys and girls learned to knit at knitting school. The girls sometimes knitted during recess. They marked the row they started on to see how far they knitted each day.

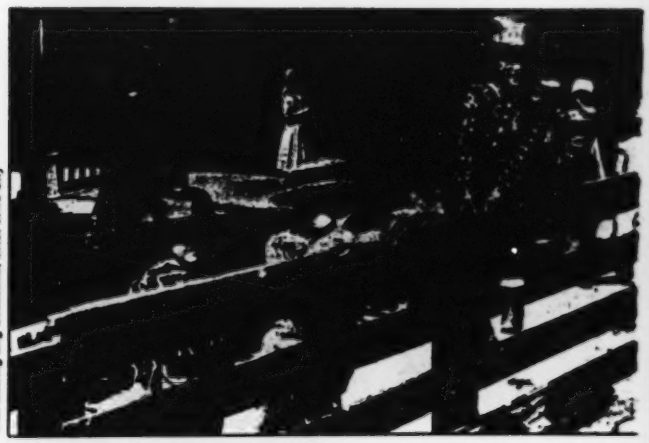
Boys played ball—not so much baseball, but catch. They also liked to toss the kittenball over roofs.

The "Miller Song"

This game had a number of variations. Betty Wetjen said she thought someone from the "outside" had recited it. Through telling it over time, the game had changed a lot. To play, kids formed two circles, one inside the other. Girls stood in the inner circle, boys in the outer circle. As they would recite, one circle went clockwise while the other went counterclockwise. At the end they would dance in a circle with their partners.

Here are a few of the verses kids recited when playing:

Happy is the Miller boy who lives by the mill,
The wheels go round by.
Hand in the hopper and the other in the sack
The ladies step forward and the gents step back
You run the reaper and I run the binder,
Lost my true love and where shall I find her.



Joan Liffring-Zug Collection, SHSI-Iowa City

Amana boys and girls

We're marching 'round the lily,
We're marching 'round the lily.
We're marching 'round the lily.
For lovers today
Go in and out the window.
Go in and out the window.
Go in and out the window.
For lovers today.
Go stand before your lover.
Go stand before your lover.
Go stand before your lover.
And bow before you go.
Young maiden, you must dance in the nice pretty circle
Young maiden, you must stand still three times, three times more you must turn. Young maiden, you should not pull anyone.

The bridge is broken.
Who broke it?
The goldsmith, the goldsmith with his youngest daughter.
"We want to re-build it."
"We want to re-build it."
With what, with what?
With silver, gold, and limestone
We all sit down.

Oma's Attic

If you visited an old Amana home, you'd probably find all kinds of family treasures in the attic. Many items from communal days are stored in residents' attics.

Find these hidden items in this typical grandmother's attic: barrel, kitchen stool, bottle, bucket, basket, quilt, picture frame, cookie cutters, rocking chair, *Klickerbahn*, and sled.

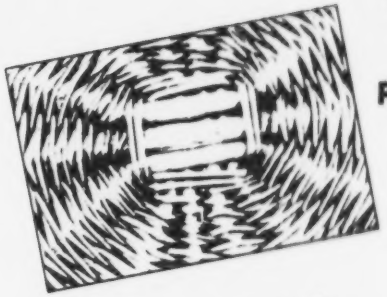
(*Answer on page 30.*)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

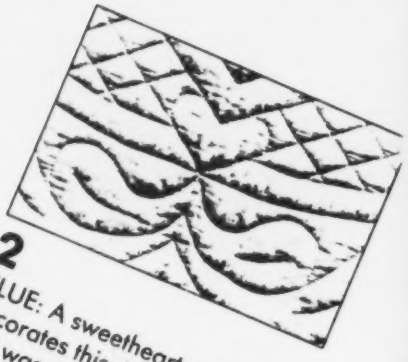
Eyeball Benders

The more you see, the less you see. Can you discover what these Amana objects are?

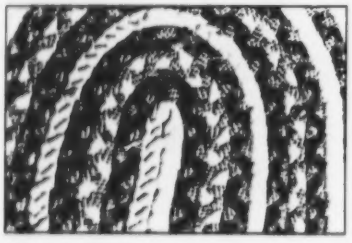
Photographs by Steven Ohrn



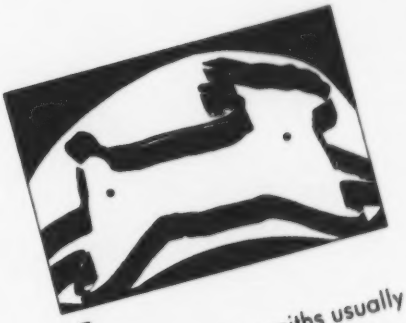
1
CLUE: This Amana item is made from willow and can be used for storage.



2
CLUE: A sweetheart pattern decorates this Amana craft that was made by a group of Amana women.



3
CLUE: In order to avoid waste, Amana people braided, knitted, and crocheted worn-out cotton and wool clothing into many of these.



4
CLUE: Amana tinsmiths usually made and repaired kitchen utensils. On special occasions and holidays such as Easter, Amana people baked treats with items like this.

5
CLUE: During communal times (before 1932) both boys and girls learned this craft in order to make practical things such as stockings and these.

(*Answers on page 30.*)

Disk Detective

by Jean E. Wulf

Goldie and Wild Rosie are on an architecture detective mission. They are looking for something common that you'd find on an old Amana building.

To find out what the mystery object is, load BASIC on an Apple IIe or IIc (with an 80-character screen) or on an IBM Personal Computer. Type in all characters below as shown.

```
10 CLS
20 PRINT TAB(20)"NNNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN"
30 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"SPC
(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
40 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"SPC
(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
50 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"SPC
(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
60 PRINT TAB(20)"NNNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN"
70 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"SPC
(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
80 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"SPC
(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
90 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"SPC
(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
100 PRINT TAB(20)"NNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN"
110 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"
SPC(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
120 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"
SPC(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
130 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"
SPC(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
140 PRINT TAB(20)"NNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN"
150 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"
SPC(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
160 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"
SPC(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
170 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"
SPC(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
180 PRINT TAB(20)"NNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN"
190 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"
SPC(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
200 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"
SPC(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
210 PRINT TAB(20)"NN"SPC(10)"N"
SPC(10)"N"SPC(10)"NN"
220 PRINT TAB(20)"NNNNNNNNNNNNN
NNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN"
230 END
```

(Answer on page 30.)

History Makers

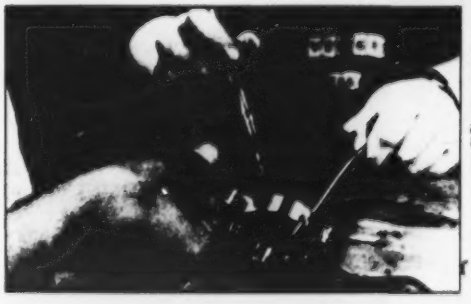
Shannon Albert, 11, weaves a rug on a loom at the Amana/Clear Creek Middle School in Middle Amana. It's a project in Gordon Kellenberger's art class where kids learn to weave traditional Amana rugs. "Boys and girls work on it," says Shannon. "Weaving isn't just a girls' thing."

A Homestead (one of the Amana villages) resident, Shannon watched her babysitter, George Berger, weave. Shannon's grandfather was also a weaver. "It looked like it was fun to do," according to Shannon. "The patterns are unbelievable and fun to create," she says. "We pick our own colors. It's not very hard to learn and once we make the rug—it will last forever."

Like many other kids, Shannon is interested in saving the environment and thinks Amana rug weaving helps. "It's a good way to recycle," says Shannon. "We cut up old rags in one-inch strips, sew them together, and then weave. We even use cut-up clothes and old jeans."

Gordon Kellenberger

Steven Olsen



Gordon Kellenberger

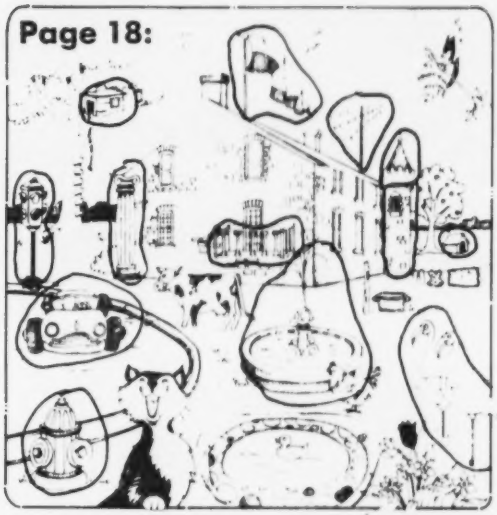
Shannon Albert (above) weaves a traditional Amana rug at the Amana/Clear Creek Middle School. Shannon told The Goldfinch that she enjoys weaving. She used to make pot holders on a smaller loom. An industrial arts student (left) works on a traditional cookie cutter.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

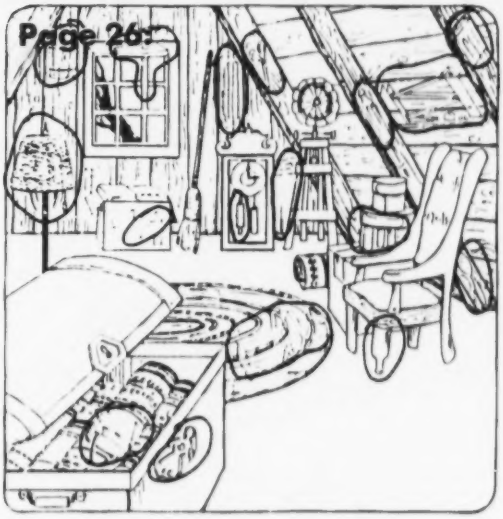
Answers

Page 16:

Page 18:



Page 26:



Page 27: (1) basket; (2) quilt; (3) rugs; (4) bunny cookie cutter; (5) mittens.

Page 28: window with nine panes over six panes.

WATCH OUT! YOU COULD END UP LIKE. . .

Struwwelpeter (STREW-vel-petter) was the German name of one awful little boy. The name means "Dirty Boy." *Struwwelpeter* refused to wash his hair or cut his fingernails. Birds nested in his hair and one day he sat on his own fingernails and stabbed himself! *Struwwelpeter* was one of many bad children in a popular book written by a German doctor in 1844. In each story something weird and terrible would happen to a bad child.

Like many other German-Americans, Amana grown-ups would often give this book to children and tell them if they didn't wash their hair, cut their fingernails, stop sucking their thumbs, being rude, making noises, playing with food, they could (GASP!) end up like *Struwwelpeter*!

P.S. Try saying THAT name three times fast!

—Susanna Ashton

University of Iowa Library/Special Collections

YODELAYHEEHOO!
HEY, ROSIE! WHAT'S WITH THE SQUEEZE BOX AND THE POLKA TUNE!
WELL, GOLDIE, I'M OFF TO VISIT THE AMANA COLONIES AND I WANT TO LOOK THE PART.
ROSIEEE! THAT'S NOT THE WAY THEY DRESS IN THE AMANAS!
OOOOOPS! WELL... I'LL BE BACK.
ZOOOM!
IS THIS MORE LIKE IT?
NOT EXACTLY!
? ? ?
YOU LOOK A LOT LIKE AN AMISH GIRL, BUT DEFINITELY NOT AMANA!
JUST DRESS THE WAY YOU NORMALLY DO, AND YOU'LL FIT IN JUST FINE.
OK!
JERRY BROWN

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Ivan Lafrinz Zeg Collection. SHSI Iowa City

The Goldfinch

US ISSN 0278-0208
State Historical Society of Iowa
402 Iowa Avenue
Iowa City, IA 52240

Second-class postage paid
at Iowa City, Iowa

S

GO 47405SOCIALSINDNAN A
Social Studies Dev Center
2805 E. 10th St Suite 120
Indiana UniversityITE 120
BLOOMINGTON IN 47405

BEST COPY AVAILABLE